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International Federation for East Timor

c/o Kure YWCA
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5 May 1991

To all solidarity groups which attended the 11th Solidarity Meeting in Lisbon
(Please give us your answer to this letter by 12 May via fax or telephone.)

Dear Friends,

The 11th Solidarity Meeting decided to go ahead with the project to form an international NGO for East Timor to be registered at the Deaprtment of Public Information of the UN. The Japanese Coalition was given the task to prepare necessary documents for application, which I thought at the time of the meeting would not be a difficult one since we have agreed to the idea in principle. Since then I have been in close contact with Mr. Akatani in New York receiving through him advices from the official of the DPI in charge of NGOs. There were some advices that we had to consider.

Firstly the name of the NGO we agreed upon at the meeting is 'too strong' according to the official. The DPI official himself suggested a name, The International Group for Solidarity with East Timor. But we think this is too long. And this cannot be abbreviated in a nice way. So we want to suggest a different name, The International Federation for East Timor (IFET). If you have no objection, we go with this name.

Secondly we were asked to submit the statute of the NGO. I composed the statute in a rather vague and loose way so that what the statute says is not very different from the present condition of the groups. However I needed to write some articles in a clear way. You should pay attention to Chapter 3 Membership. With introducing the concept 'membership', groups are devided into member NGOs and non-member NGOs, at least for the time being. But this does not prevent non-member NGOs from participating in the solidarity meetings. They can be invited as guests and observers and virtually they participate in the discussions and activities as before. I hope this does not cause a serious problem because in fact we rarely 'decide' anything. Another point to be noticed is 6-C (3) which says one participant NGO has one vote. So it is made clear here that not a participating individual, but a group has a vote. 6-D (3) and (4) also must be considered. In any circumstances we should try to avoid voting but if it is necessary a resolution is adopted with the majority of 50%. If you have suggestions and amendments, please tell me immediately. But the time is so limited (the deadline of submission is the middle of May), we would be glad if you agree to this first, and then next year we will discuss necessary changes.

During the solidarity meeting I suggested that Jean Inglis (Kure YWCA East Timor Group, the very pioneer of the present movement in Japan) become the President of the NGO. However she refused

proposal for she thinks she is already regarded as a 'troublemaker' by Mr. Rafeeudin Ahmed. Of course we don't think that can affect our application, but since she strongly refuses, we went to Mr. Ohtori Kurino, former Japanese ambassador for Cambodia and Syria. He taught International Law at the Hiroshima University after he retired and now is leading the Japan Unesco League. He is a consultant for the Solidarity with Independent East Timor, the Osaka group. He accepted our request with the condition that he does not have much time for the work of the IFET. This week he and Kiyo will go to the UN Public Information Center in Tokyo to meet with the chief there to get recommendation from him for application.

The Secretariat is at Kure YWCA and the Secretary is Ms. Yoshiko Kawagoe, leader of Kure YWCA. On 11-12 May the Japanese solidarity groups have a national meeting in Kure and there we will discuss how to work for the IFET. For the time being please contact me, Jean or Kiyo if you want to know about the Secretariat of the IFET.

We made the letterhead of the IFET. I'm writing on it. We didn't print many so that we can change the design in the near future.

We started this project with funds raised in Japan. But in the near future we will report on the finances to you and next year we have to discuss how to raise maney for the Secretariat.

Please contact me as quickly as possible about the following points.

(1) Does your organization join the IFET? (This means you approve the statute.)
If you join the IFET, then:
(2) Do you agree to the name; The International Federation for East Timor?
(3) Do you have any proposals for the statute? Please write concretely. (We don't guarantee that your proposal will be accepted. Basically those are to be discussed at the next solidarity meeting.)

The deadline of the answer to the above points is 12 May. Please contact me or Jean via fax or telephone. On 11-12 we are holding a national solidarity meeting in Kure, the telephone number of the meeting place, Kure Kaiin Kaikan (Seamen's Hall), is +81-823-21-5273 (Call Aki or Jean). We will start the IFET with groups who will have sent us 'yes' by the deadline.

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Jean Fax./Phone. +81-823-22-0962 (Ask her first to switch the fax on.)
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Best regards,

Aki